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The author believes that an aspect of human behavior being glossed over in psychological studies is the superb, beautiful person. He defines this individual as being: (1) free of abnormalities, (2) basically normal, well balanced, and mentally healthy, and (3) possessed of a unique group of characteristics which establish his being out of the ordinary. The author polled 681 people from age nine through 90 and asked them to write three positive experiences. The Enoblement Theory or Theory of Positive Human Experience evolved from these experiences. This theory consists of the following elements: (1) the major medium for molding the beautiful and noble person is the frequency and intensity of the subject's positive experiences expecially during childhood; (2) negative experience plays a part; (3) positive experiences is especially important in the presence of people significant to the individual; (4) it is important for the person to have worked for the experience; (5) knowledge facilitates the intensity of the experience; (6) variation adds power to the experience; (7) excitement experience is necessary; (8) individual differences exceed group differences in choice of experience; and (9) in the specific ennobling process, two parallel experiences predominate, helping another person and being helped by others. (Author/GG)

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"POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AND THE BEAUTIFUL PERSON"

Presidential Address

The Southeastern Psychological Association

By

Ted Landsman
Professor of Education
University of Florida

April 5, 1968

CG 002 099

A renewed restlessness about clinical nosology has ruffled the listless ranks of psychologists. Once we were rebellious in the face of psychiatric diagnostic terminology. The dissatisfaction has never been abated but we are no longer cursing the darkness; the scholarly tradition, which lay idle while ruder weapons flashed in argument, seems now to be our ploughshare in the conjoint efforts to produce an understanding of all classes of human behavior. It is not so much the roots of the client's distortions and self torture which escape us but the discernment of the change agents. And who can say with certainty where the roads of readjustment run or plot the paths of return from abnormality unless he is safely surrounded by his own graduate students, patients, wives, or those ever available lay audiences easily enchanted by magic words and fearful tales. The full ranges of human behavior and the possibilities of personalities are in truth much mused over by us hardly abide in the vacant certainties of our minds. Our learned descriptions and elegant psychodynamics are like the lengthy intellectual discussions created by Fellini--they make a lovely obligato to the action going on but they are not life itself. Somehow, we are out of the channel of reality, we are not where the action is. There is some central, significant thread of life, of behavior which we are not seeing, studying, considering. There is the jawbone of the missing anthropoid to be unearthed, the formula for the changing mass in moving particles, the inadequacy of the single helix to be explained, the philosopher's stone to be shattered.

Our philosopher's stone, our double helix is hidden in the understanding of the other side of the personality continuum, the obverse of psychoses and neurosis, not the inadequate nor the troubled person, not the super person but the superb person. The missing link called the beautiful and noble person.

Positive Experience

In six years of preoccupation with the matters enshrined in the title of this paper, I have found inescapable the assumption that the frequency and intensity of positive experiences in the life history of the person are critical to the etiology of the beautiful person. In another paper I have suggested that negative experiences or crises which have had positive effects are also involved in the beautiful person; in number, I still would hypothesize them to be fewer in the histories of the beautiful persons than the out and out positive experiences--events which transpire or which we bring about and which in retrospect are seen by the subject as "good."

Experiences may be seen, in a sense, perhaps more palatable to some psychologists as composed of S-R units or S-O-R units. The child who writes of the delight in buying an ice cream cone for an adult for the first time in his life, experiences the joys of altruism and is on the road to being a compassionate person for those rewards. That experience is composed of the stimulus to the nerve endings created by the touch of the dime on his palm, the response of clutching and the meaning of the stimulus interpreted by the organism. But to deal with the effect of these experiences on an SR basis at this time is a task beyond us, although by no means beneath us. Some day

it must be done thus, but at present the "experience" seems to be the smallest unit practical for research, let along for interpersonal facilitation of experiences.

The hardly touched world of positive experiences and of the beautiful person demands a program of exploration which would show, as its final evidence of the gaining of this new world, a new set of psychological skills aimed at the development of beautiful people and the transmitation of those of us who are more like dross into gold. I can foresee the exploration in so many stages.

1. Empirical observation of beautiful people leading to a nosology or lawful classification of their order.

2. Empirical observation of the etiology or causation probably leading to a classification of positive human experiences.

3. Subsequent more extensive observation of positive human experiences.

4. Formulation of a theory of positive self development, a theory of beautiful people development.

5. Continuous test of the theory, revision, etc. in the form of experimental creation of positive experiences followed by experimental facilitation of the development of beautiful people.

This paper will detail steps in Number 2 largely but some brave attempts as far along as Number 5 have been reported in another paper (Landsman).

The classification and frequency of positive human experiences. 681 subjects happly wrote down three experiences in our major study of these experiences. An excellent age range was obtainable which included samples of:

Fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, 11th and 12th grade children

College freshmen and sophomores

Graduate students

Student wives

Community adults

Octogenerians--a group of 80 year olds.

Thus, our age range was from about nine to 90.

The seven categories in Table I then seemed to emerge and now represent our first major attempt at a taxonomy of experiences. I want to assure you we already have two alternate systems: Completion and Frequency.

Reliability of these experiences was high, .78 to .98 when independent raters were compared.

Our first questions centered about the relative frequency of the human relationship experience. Lurking under some heavy undergrowth, we saw the possibility of the human relationship experience being the most powerful creater of the beautiful person. A frequency tabulation for various age groups and for the total sample was made with the following results. (See Illustrations I-VI.).

The primacy of the human relationship experience seems hardly in doubt; some 40 percent for the elementary school child rising to some 60 percent for the general adult. It seems a reasonable hypothesis that most of the experiences which foster maximal adjustment or personal fulfillment are with fellow human beings. For all age levels except the elementary level, the "Earned Success" category seems to be second in importance. (See Table II.)

One of the more interesting implications throughout is the possibility of the individual creating these kinds of experiences for himself, particularly during those moments when he feels most piercingly the needs to lift himself above the level of the moment. While the solution for such moments for many of us is to listen to a favorite record, go off to the nearest bar or buy a new hat, the data would suggest you look first for healthy companionship and secondly, that you do something worthwhile. Years ago a colleague of mine whom I had been counseling through a desperate period in his life simultaneously published his first book and successfully concluded his counseling. I have often wondered which of those events really came first.

The "Earned Success" category has a hidden significance regardless, if it as some colleagues have suggested, an artifict of American capitalism, the Judea-Christian ethic or Western decadence--none of which I believe to be true. It does imply that for an experience to be meaningful in the sense of its contribution to the enduring personality of the person--in contrast to its simplest significance as a momentary, hedonistic kick--the experience must be seen as having been earned. Thus, the parent who signs for Cub Scout badges for his child which were hardly earned and the hippie who gets his thrills from pot in the cozy comfort of his pad instead of climbing a mountain are both contributing to the descendance in self-esteem and self-fulfillment of the personalities involved.

The apparently poor showing of the "beauty" experience has been disappointing to the more aesthetes. It does appear that for most of us, the beauty experience alone is rarely seen as world-shaking but more likely as momentary. I am unwilling to reason that beauty experiences are this rarely

TABLE I

COMPOSITE FREQUENCY OF 36 GROUPS

Condition	Frequency
1. Conquest	111
2. Excitement	206
3. Beauty	79
4. Completion	132
5. Earned Success	347
6. Human Relationship	875
7. Super-Human Relationship	83

N = 1833 Responses
n = 681 Respondents

ILLUSTRATION I

TOTAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

N = 578 Responses

n = 201 Respondents

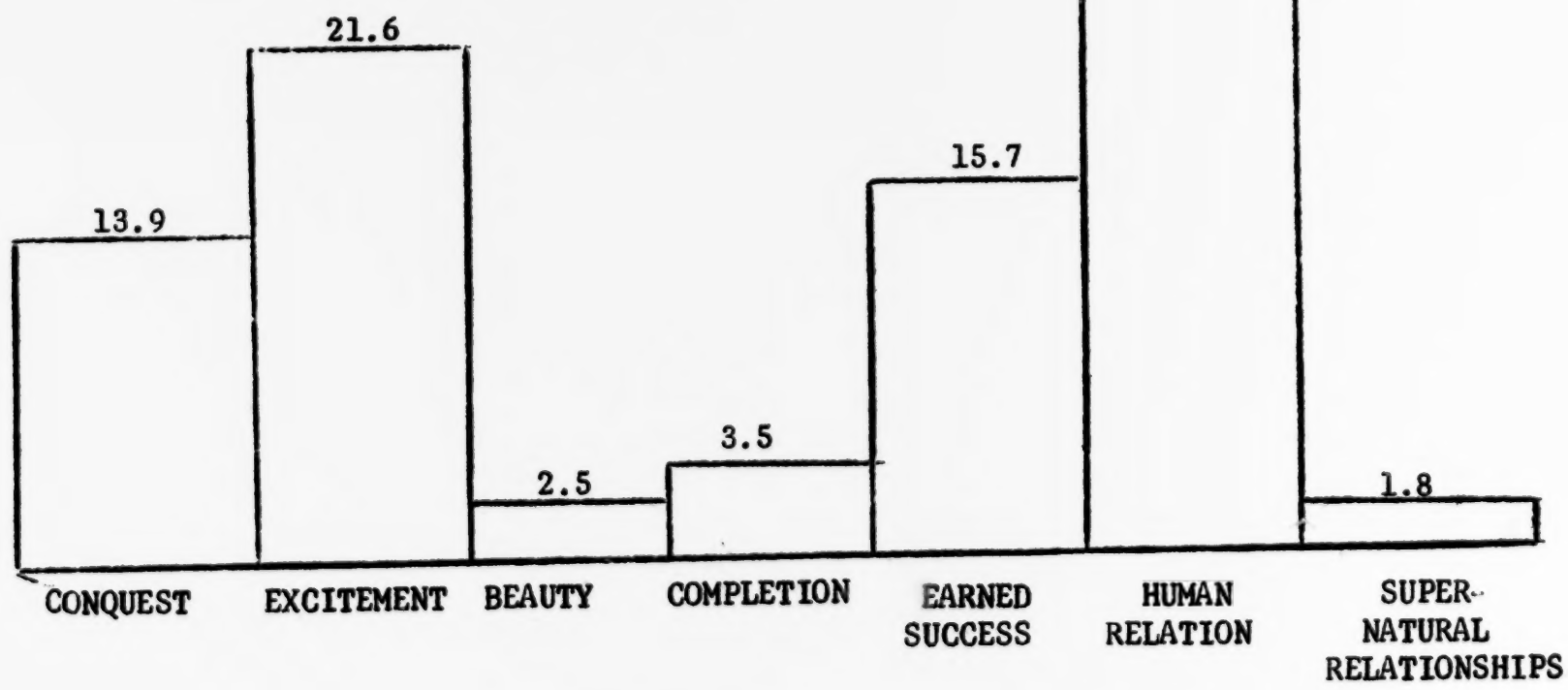


ILLUSTRATION II

TOTAL HIGH SCHOOL

N = 314 Responses

n = 113 Respondents

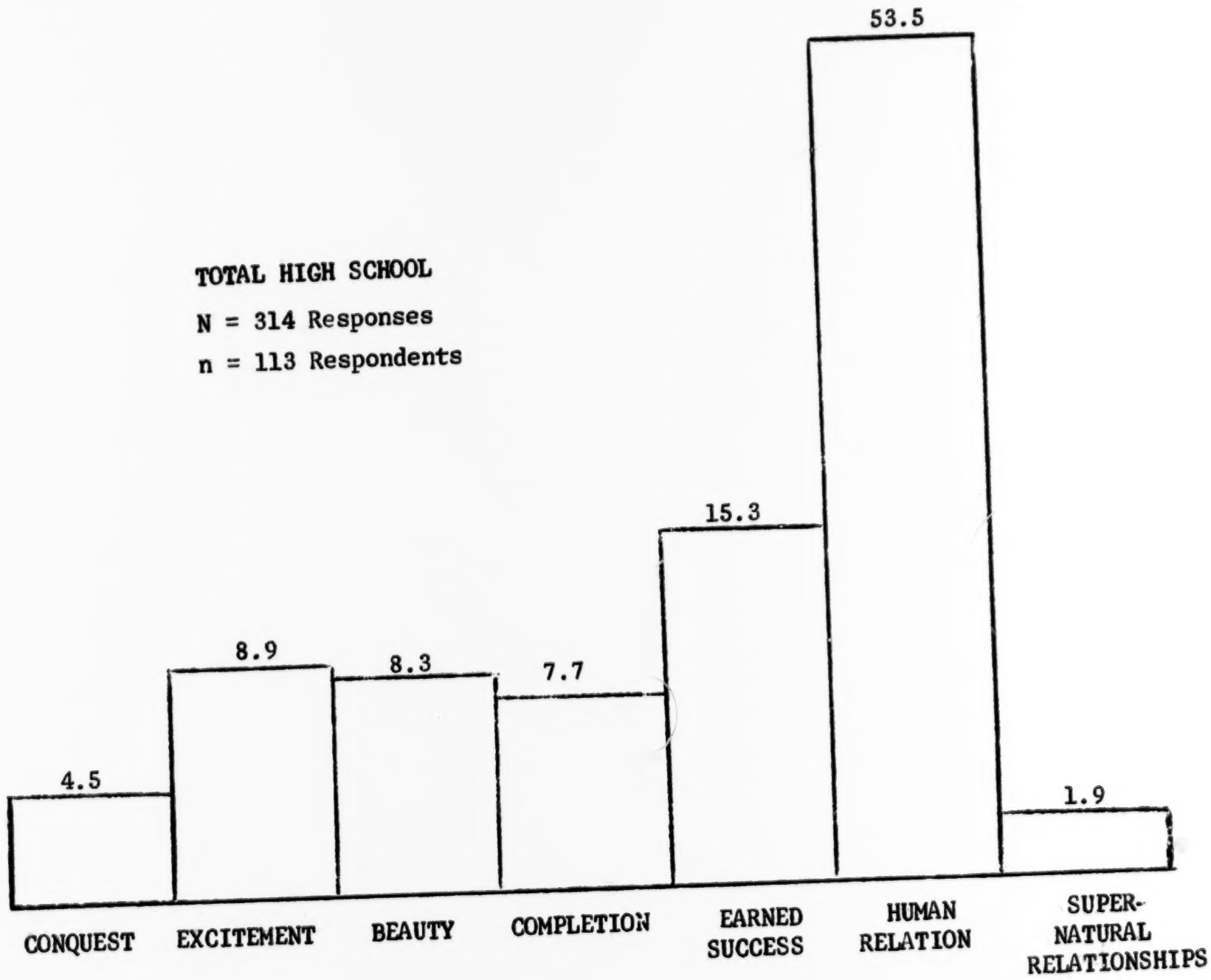


ILLUSTRATION III

TOTAL JUNIOR COLLEGE

N = 642 Responses

n = 265 Respondents

ILLUSTRATION IV

TOTAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

N = 120 Responses

n = 39 Respondents

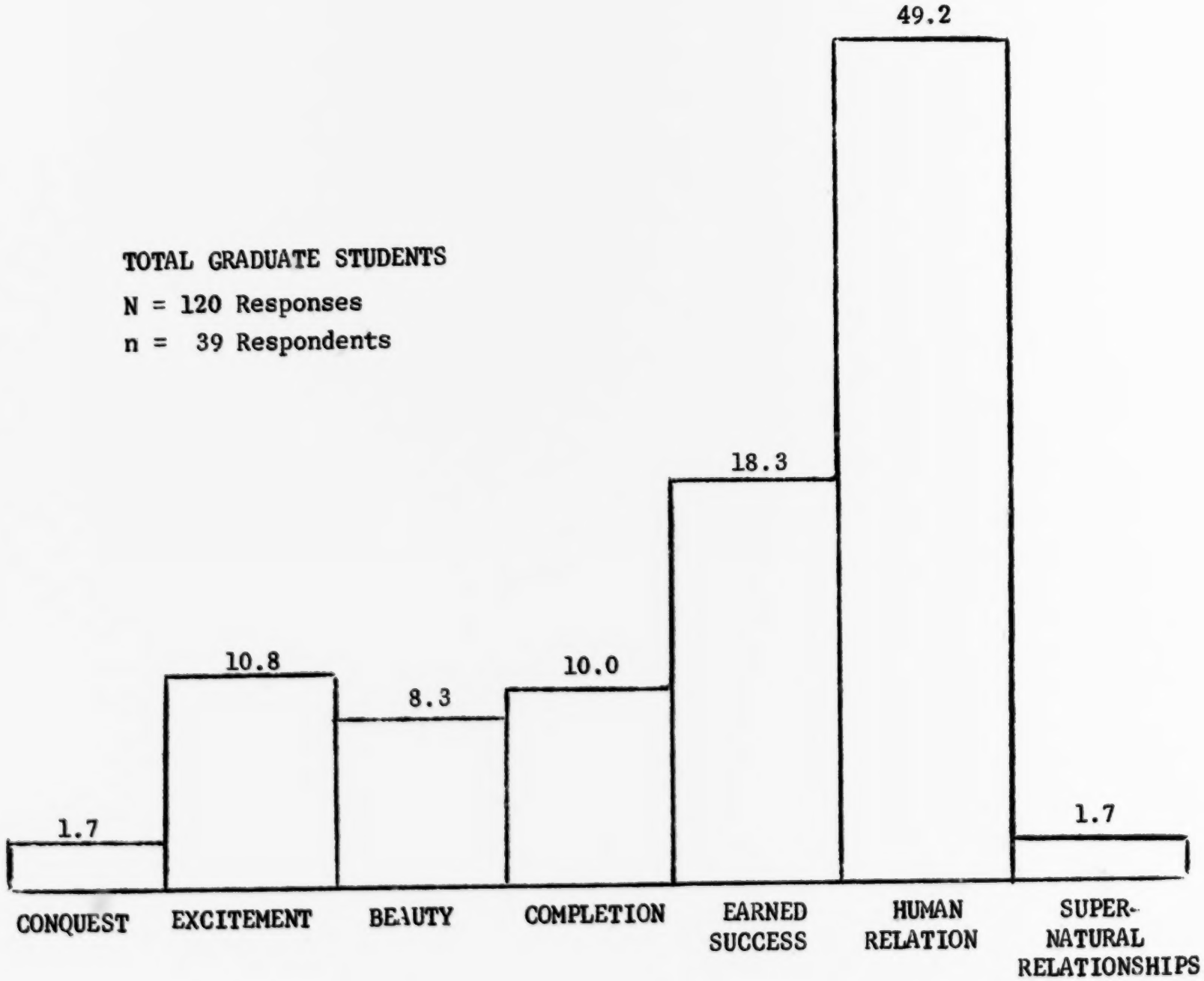


ILLUSTRATION V

TOTAL GROUP

N = 1833 Responses
n = 681 Respondents

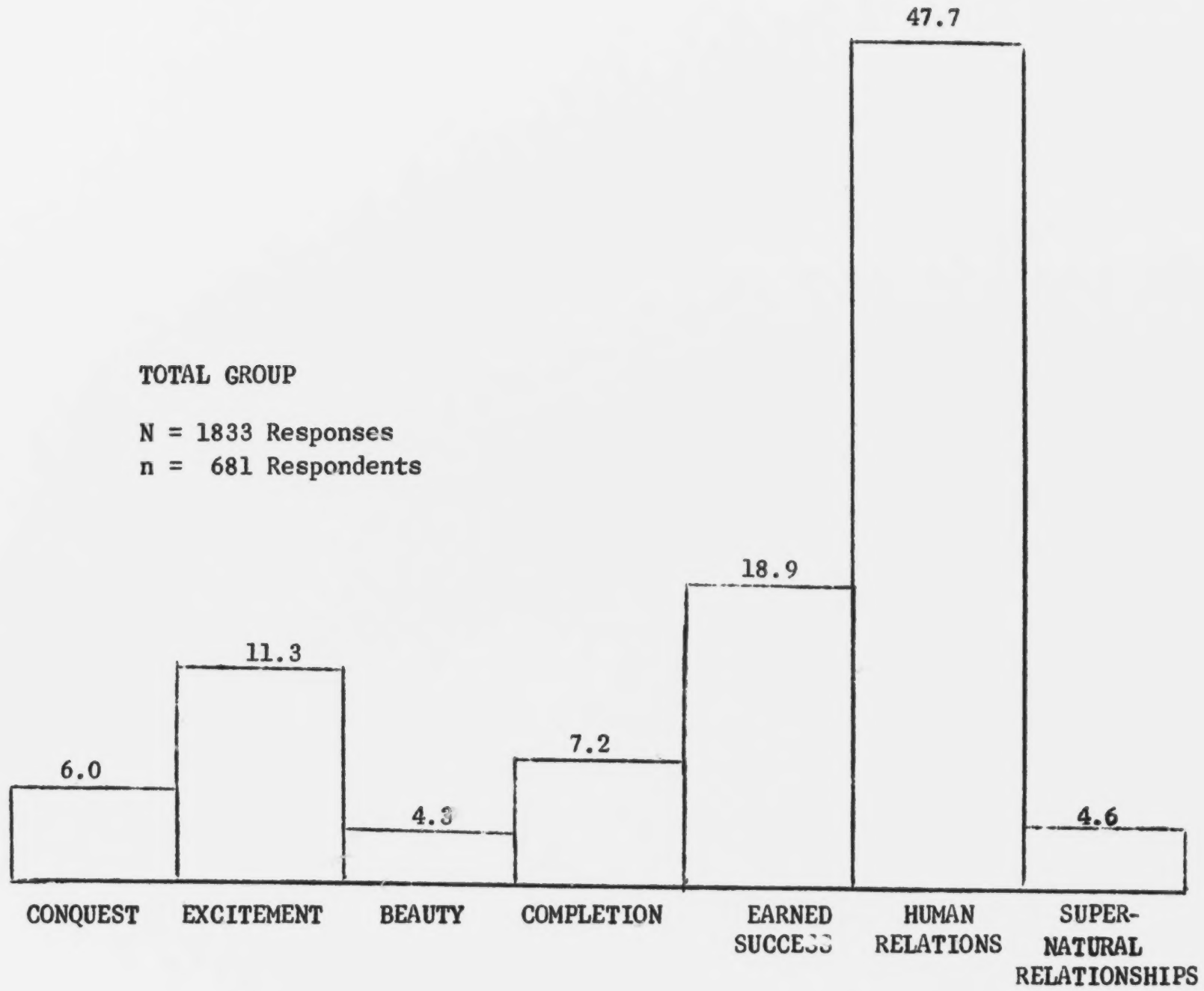


ILLUSTRATION VI

TOTAL GENERAL ADULT

N = 181 Responses
n = 63 Respondents

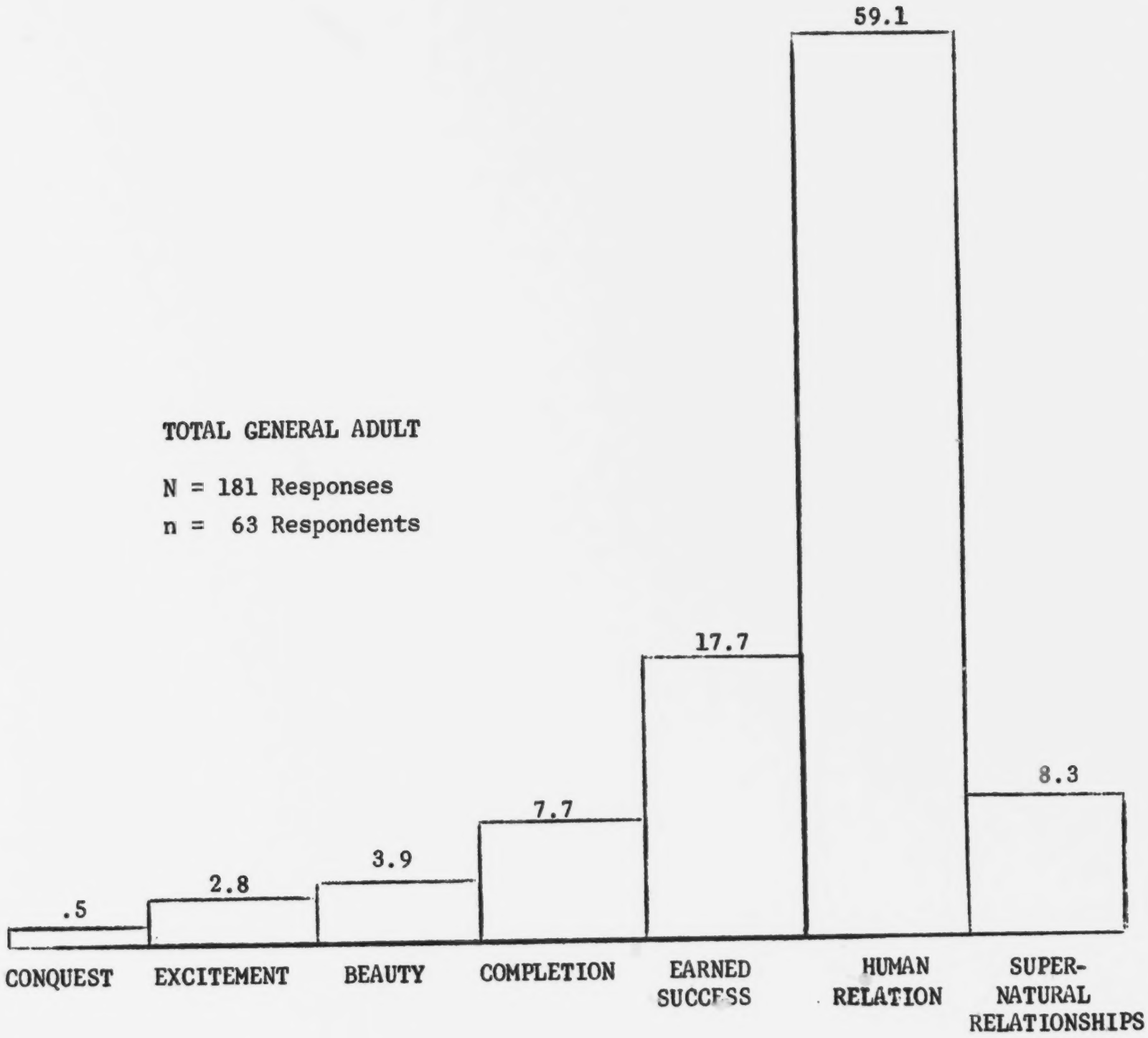


TABLE II

RANK ORDER	FREQUENCY OF POSITIVE EXPERIENCE					
	Total Group	Adult	Graduate Student	Junior College	High School	Elementary
Human Relationship	1	1	1	1	1	1
Earned Success	2	2	2	2	2	4
Excitement	3	6	3	5	3	2
Completion	4	4	4	3	5	5
Conquest	5	7	6.5	7	6	3
Super-Natural Experiences	6	3	6.5	4	7	7
Beauty	7	5	5	6	4	6

found in the beautiful person. We need to remind ourselves that these data are of a rather usual population and do not necessarily represent the relative frequency of such experience amongst the beautiful persons. I suspect these will be more frequent among the higher levels, or that single experiences are not at issue so much as is a myriad of experiences which weave a fabric of aethetic joys for the lovely ones. Secondly, I venture that this particular category holds a special significance in that it will be most vulnerable to modification through learning, that the uses of beauty in personality development or growth will require knowledge aquisition. The response to an opera is much richer when one knows the story and the musical structure; the breathlessness of delight in the "drinking in" of an original painting comes when one recognizes the particular brush strokes of Van Gogh or Hans Hals. The more preceptive descriptions of cultural deprivation and poverty dwell upon the absence of beauty, the dullness, the dreariness, the bad smell. The way out and the way to the appreciation of beauty for the deprived will require skillful teaching beyond mere trips to the art gallery.

The importance of the excitement experience deserves a few thrilling sentences. Like tender loving care, we often assume that this spice to life is necessary only for children. These data indicate its significant involvement there, but also suggests that even staid graduate students find it nourishing. I don't recall any of the experiences reported as having taken place in their classrooms. It does seem to die a natural but sad death in adult life. My conclusion, of course, is that it ought not to do so.

Alternate System: The Anatomy of Experiences

A second approach to the taxonomy of experience would require a close study of the anatomy of experiences. There are a few attempts at these underway involving reports of experiences, rather than observations of the experience itself. I see much promise in these approaches and will report to you of five studies completed recently by my students involving a Turning Point Experience (Fuerst), the Experience of Being Understood (Baggett), Negative Experiences (MacKenzie), the Intense Experience (Lynch), and the Transcendent Experience (Privette).

Turning Point Experiences. Turning point experiences are those described by subjects which result in a major change in their lives for the good in this instance. An example is this report by a 39 year old male: "The birth of my daughter proved to be a turning point experience in my life. At the time my child was born and prior to that time, I was what one could consider an alcoholic. However, when I gazed at my child, I realized how very helpless we both were, she and I. I thought I could do something about my helplessness, but she was too little and too dependent to do anything about hers. I knew this child needed a father upon whom she could rely to take her by the hand and help her until she could be independent. She deserved a steady father, not an alcoholic. Hence, a great change in me and in my life."

In Fuerst's study of some 153 such experiences, he found surprisingly, that the most frequent single kind of experience reported as being a positive turning point in one's life was the death or illness of a relative. This has led us to a study of negative experiences by MacKenzie.

Negative experiences. Apparently there was some good in negative experiences. What made the difference between an unhappy experience which seared the soul and made its temper truer and the fire which crumbled the will into the ignobility of black ash? A child is thrown into the water and told to swim or die by his grandfather. Terrified, he swims and comes out, strangely enough, learning that he could have done without being pushed and becomes more self assertive. A young mother gives birth to a stillborn child, is shattered and in recovering, finds renewed faith in life. The anatomy revealed includes the existence of the negative-negative experience and the negative-positive experience and in particular the more frequent, statistically significant, presence of a helping person for those events which became positive. For those of us like myself who have always wanted to usurp the role of the one God, this study has great implications. Though we cannot shield our children from natural or accidental disasters--such as the death of a parent, we can transform the effect of these events so as to be strengthening rather than personality shattering.

Further implications in this direction are found in a study by Baggett on behaviors which result in understanding as seen by teenagers. Lynch's study of "Intense Experience" represents another excursion into the anatomy of experience. Among other concepts, he emerges with a concept of the bitter-sweet and sweet-bitter experiences with mixed results, however, with one or the other predominating. An interesting by-product of this study was the choice of mothers who, while discussing the intense experience of giving birth, would only mention the child, while fathers included both wife and child in the report.

A transcendant experience, according to Privette, is one wherein the individual exceeds his usual performance. One of her subjects reports: "Having studied music for several years, reading music at sight, however, is quite different and does have its problems for me. Recently, I was called upon to transpose a rather difficult selection in accompanying a soloist. Not having seen the music before and performing it for the first time for a large audience, I gritted my teeth and started playing. Through my ear and concentrating earnestly, I played this piece through with no errors. No one realized my challenge or achievement, but the sense of accomplishment I felt can never be duplicated." Privette's study involved a factor analysis of the conditions prior to the experience. Among the anatomical details revealed, is a feeling of "clear focus upon self and upon an object and the relationship between self and object," all of these are of considerable consequence from the point of view of self theory.

Far distant in the future is the prospect of study of actual experiences as they occur, measurement of personality change and even farther--on the other side of the moon so to speak--is the prospect of experimental creation of positive experiences. Mary Landsman and Robert Paul have, however, recently completed an experimental study involving the "creation" of positive experiences, in this case, the helping experience.

First to brave the unhumored caustics of his colleagues in this area was A. H. Maslow. His concept of the peak experience took psychology as a profession around and past a turning point--a quiet revolution of whose rag-tag armies we are one. Maslow's theory building included a system of needs which suggested that the "metaneeds" or higher order needs are characteristic of the person we seek, referred to in his system as the "self-actualized" person.

Here is a glossary of other attempts:

The Fully Functioning Person (Rogers)

The Disclosed Self (Jourard)

The Personality Growth Facilitator (McMillan)

The Mentally Healthy (Jahoda)

The Open Self (Morris)

The well-balanced, the normal, the super person, the productive, the efficient, the self-fulfilled, the self-realized. I have little doubt but that all of these terms refer to the same kind of person, the same class of behavior.

For those who have sought samples of live humans upon which to base their research such as Maslow, these attributes are thought of as being held by the smallest elite group, perhaps one tenth of one percent of the population. Thus, Maslow in his earliest group named individuals such as Albert Schweitzer and Eleanor Roosevelt. Others, however, such as Puttick, have set lower sights, choosing the upper 10 percent or in some instances, the upper third of a sample of teachers college students.

In all instances, however, it should be clear that nobody argues anymore about normality, the issue is super-normality, its description, its discovery, in a fashion, its diagnosis, and perhaps most of all its nurture. Because this person merits an appellation which is beyond any single set of dynamics used to describe the personality make-up, such as fully functioning and because the term cannot escape the responsibility of an external definition as well, I am confortable with the term "beautiful" or "beautiful and noble"

person. You will note that most of the definitions are sponsored by phenomenologists and existentialists who, in sweet consistency, prefer terms which emphasize the individual's internal state of being. Though a humanist myself, I believe the external description, how the person is perceived by others, to be of equal importance and so the term "beautiful and noble person" is offered without apology, as being external in its description, yet connoting an inner state of being. Thus, these persons would evoke a perception of beauty from us as we encounter them and implied also is a state of similar perception of self, sans conceit, sans false humility, sans apology.

Significance of the Study of the Beautiful Person

I feel myself to be suspect when I beg your concern for the subject within the guise of its being good for the understanding of abnormality. Perhaps this subtlety is an unnecessary ruse. The proper reason is that the study of man's best self, is the proper study of mankind. The resultant understanding of abnormality is wish fulfillment enough but small reward it is in the face of the promise of three greater wishes which some quaint fairy might bestow upon us.

1. To know how to restore the abnormal not just to normality but to the fullest use of their potential, to the beautiful state.

2. To discover those experiences and behaviors which, when applied to our children, bring them to this superb state of existence, i.e. the developmental purpose.

3. And, applicable to most of us who are reasonably normal and in their adult years, to find the "psychotherapies" which facilitate their change to the state of the beautiful and noble person.

Description and Definition of the Beautiful Person

The struggle for definition of the beautiful person is more like Jacob grappling with the angel than is the familiar problem of contesting with the devil. Rather than being consumed by the fires of hell, the danger is more of being vanquished by drowning in one's own treacle terms.

In the light of our past knowledge of maladjustment, which is by no means irrelevant to our understanding of the new concepts, the beautiful person must first be seen as:

I. Free of abnormality

   A. Devoid of major symptoms of psychoses or neurosis (delusions, obsessions, passive or active hostility, etc.).

   B. Possessed of accurate, sharp perception of reality (this criterion obviously involves the interaction of intelligence and personality).

II. Basically normal, well-balanced, mentally healthy.

III. Possessed of unique group of characteristics which establish his being out of the ordinary--it is this thrid criterion where the tedious recitation of universal experiences enters.

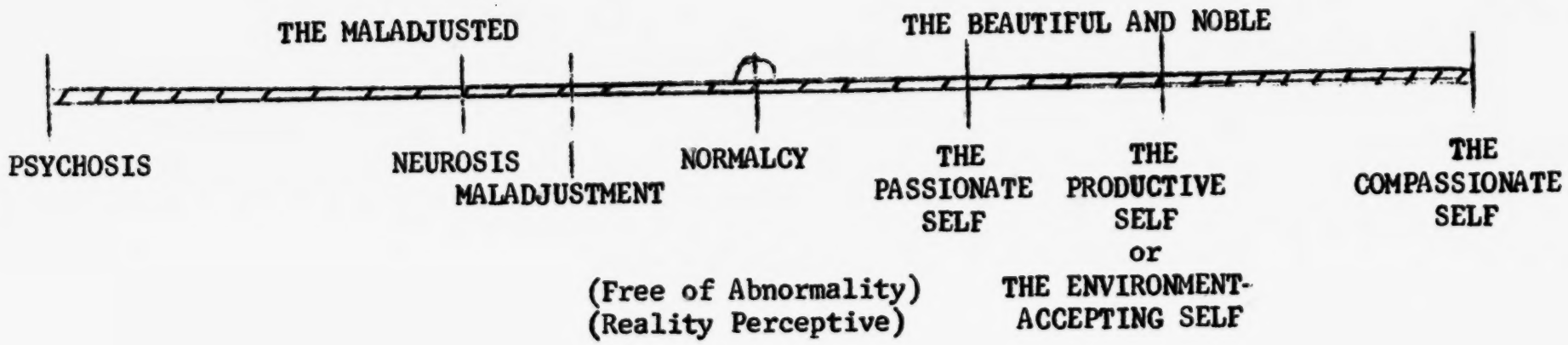
I should like to venture a taxonomy based upon all previous writers including Maslow, May, Jourard and others and which emerges out of my own research in positive human experience. A compelling view to me is that this person is to be judged as to his extraordinariness in relationship to himself, then in relationship to his external world, animate and inanimate and, finally, in relationship to other human beings. The evidence concerning relationship of acceptance of self and of others, leaves it difficult and not entirely difensivle to insist upon acceptance of self as the primary criterion, but I am going to venture this hypotheses: That the beautiful person must first and above all, be self-accepting, self-liking, self-enjoying, self-expressive, self-understanding person. Secondly, he is characterized by a joyful, passionate relationship with his external environment, he loves the sidewalks of New York, or the mountains of New Hampshire, or the New Mexico deserts, or the dusty village roads, the paintings on the wall of the Metropolitan, the hum of the lathe, the shining tile of the kitchen. In his third highest manifestation, he is characterized by a particular relationship with other human beings, a compassionate, helping, personally facilitating one, which involves love, deep care and commitment. (See Illustration VII.)

I am led to this system by its parsimoniousness, its primitive elegance and its continuous emergence in a series of studies of positive human experience--the stuff out of which these personalities are, in a sense, fashioned. All experience may be classified into those with self, those with others and those with the external world. A self experience is one such as included in Hughes' <u>High Wind in Jamaica</u>, and which has since become a classic of Spiegelberg (Combs and others). An adolescent girl, barely 11 years old, captured with her siblings by pirates, climbs up into the rigging and feels the wind, first in her hair, and then as it touches every part of her body.

"Once settled on her perch," Hughes writes, "she begain examining the skin of her hands with utmost care: for it was hers! She slipped a shoulder out of the top of her frock; and, having peeped in to make sure she really was continuous under her clothes, she shrugged it up to touch her cheek. The contact of her face and the bare warm hollow of her shoulder gave her a comfortable thrill. . .but which was the caresser and which the caressed? That no analysis could tell her."

A similar experience was reported by one of our subjects, a 40 year old woman at the conclusion of her first solo flight. Driving back alone in her convertible, she shouted to the world,""I can fly! I can fly!" <u>Experiences with others</u> are such as described by a 23 year old sophomore who tells of his

ILLUSTRATION VII

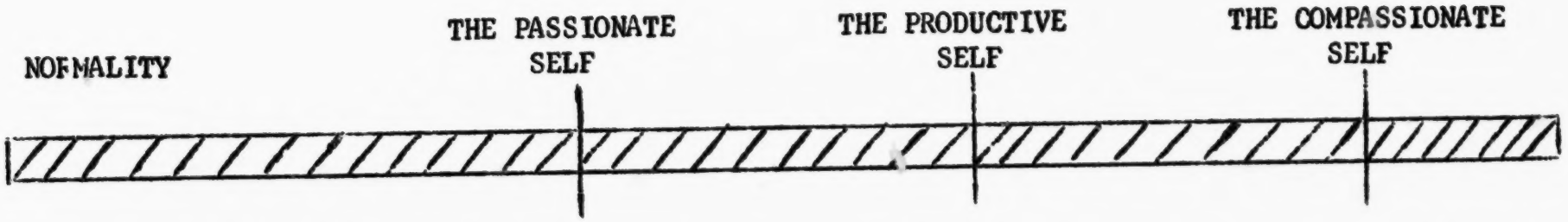


heightening excitement as his young wife approaches him in preparation for lovemaking. Experiences with the external world are exemplified in the surprise encounter with the first trilium blossom of spring in the cold woods, the Elgin marbles, the sight of the rolling seas in summer's height. Four different studies have utilized the system with satisfaction (see Table III and IV): (Fuerst, Lynch, Landsman, MacKenzie). While somewhat incidential to the classification system for beautiful people, in all four studies, self and others clearly over-weighed experiences with the external world and in three of these the experiences with others exceed significantly the experiences with self. However, I am still led to hypothsize the primacy of the self experience and the superior position of the experience with others--the compassionate experience, by my observation of the rare, beautiful people available.

The passionate self-positive context. A system with a different emphasis would substitute the "productive person" for the middle category. (See Illustration VIII.) In venturing the three criteria in this system, I want to make clear that the first is absolute, the others relative. The "personhood" of the beautiful person cannot be maintained over any reasonable length of time without a fundamental grounding, as the early phenomenologists used the term, is a "self-on-self" attitude which is generally positive. This is a familiar concept to the humanists and its modern use begins with the study by Raimy in 1948 showing positive movement in attitude twoard self in psychotherapy. A host of other self characteristics have been hypothesized--all of these are grounded in a fundamental, positive, self-liking attitude. The self-rejecting person is not open, does not disclose himself. The self-actualizing, the self-realizing person does not risk actualizing aspects of self which are despised, nor is the unlovely person consistently self-expressive. Momentarily, on occasion, yes, he can manifest a flash of brilliance or also squeeze out droplets of compassion like actor's tears upon command from the internalized. Yet, none without the fundamental positive attitude toward self, these characteristics cannot possibly be maintained consistently or be manifested in public and in private. Thus, the sweet, lovable teacher who is cruel to his wife and children does not qualify; nor does the lovable husband and father who is cruel to his office assoicates. This absolute criterion is a tangle of self-expression, positive self-regard, self-disclosure, openness of self, self-actualization, self-realization, personal commitment, self-understanding, self-enjoying, self-adequacy, and self-acceptance. The periodic yearning for solitude also serves likely as a major characteristic.

The productive person. The second level of this newly complete continuum of personality is the level of the productive person. Its position on the continuun approximates the obverse of the neurotic. Among the terms previously noted and which apply at this point are: the efficient person, the fully functioning person, the vocationally adjusted person. More accurately, he is described as a highly productive or more fully functioning individual since fullest functioning is obviously an idealization. Rogers and others

ILLUSTRATION VIII



1. Free of Abnormality
2. Reality Perceptive

1. Receptive
2. Expressive
3. Self-Enjoying

1. The Fully Functioning
2. Efficient Person
3. The Initiator
4. The Task Facilitator
5. The Fascinating Person
   a. Single Minded
   b. Varied

1. The Loving-Caring Person
2. The Excitor
3. The Socially Effective
4. The Personal Growth Facilitator

TABLE III

COMPOSITE FREQUENCY OF 36 GROUPS

Condition	Frequency
1. External World	226
2. Another Person	925
3. Self	589

N = 1740 Responses

n = 681 Respondents

TABLE IV

Number and Percent of Positive, Turning-Point, Negative, and Intense Experiences Occurring in Landsman's Three Categories (Adapted from Lynch)

	With Another	With Self	With External World	Total
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
Positive Experience (Landsman)	53.0	34.0	13.0	1740
Negative Experience (MacKenzie)	48.0	18.0	34.0	300
Intense Experience (Lynch)	76.0	16.0	8.0	217
Turning-Point Experience (Fuerst)	35.0	46.0	19.0	153
TOTAL				2410

have described the personality continuum as process rather than stage and this position agrees: this is a producing person. Production, department chairman to the contrary, does not imply the publishing of papers but in that same sphere to include for example, the production of good classes, of good students, of research ideas and of experiments and, in broader spheres, of shoes, of advertising, of cabbages, of homes, of children, of joy, etc. Perhaps the hippie apologists and the cultural relativists might cry that this stage, if real at all, is characteristic of only the Western tradition, of the Protestant-Judiac ethic, or of American Capitalism. My hypothesis is that productivity is an universal value and is a beautiful characteristic; this is no less true in Buddhistic theology, in socialistic or fascist cultures. You cannot escape it even in the South Seas.

The compassionate person. The person capable of caring for, or loving another or others, deeply, sensitively, meaningfully, actively, is represented by the highest level, termed here the compassionate person. Altruism, being truly attractive to others, the helping person, the personality growth facilitator are all represented by this level of functioning. The intrusion of false negatives is most likely here, that is, those who are seemingly modest or falsely humble. Despite the emphasis on the relationship to others in this category, there is little doubt but that solitude or being by one's self is also characteristic of the compassionate person. He obviously enjoys being by himself since he has a self worthy of enjoyment. Reports by distinguished persons in all disciplines show periods of protracted solitude as necessary for their personal growth. Buber retreated to the woods for a six months period after a student of his had taken his own life. Thoreau, Schweitzer, Einstein, all of these, in their autobiographical writings speak happily of hours and days spent alone, in splendid isolation, in personal meditation. The compassionate person, thus, is characterized by deep tenderness, loving or caring for another, altruism, the capacity to communicate with others, to sense their joy and their pain, and to understand their ideas and thoughts, to tell to others his pain, sorrow and ideas in the face of all sorts of obstacles, emotional and physical.

Characteristics of the continuum. One of the mysteries of the maladjustment continuum is its lack of continuity. There is no evidence that the down-hill course takes one through neurosis to psychosis. However, the passionate-productive compassionate continuum implies a direct continuum; the person passes through each in direct stages and the last stage cannot be obtained without gaining the first two seriatims, according to positive experience theory.

Positive Human Experience Theory

Ennoblement Theory

Having studied reports of experiences from perhaps 1,000 subjects of varying age ranges from fourth grade to senility, I should like to invest

our empirical observations and data with the scarlet and ermine robes of propositions to a theory.

Proposition
I. The major medium for the molding of the beautiful and noble person is the frequency and intensity of the subject's positive experience at all ages and stages of his conscious life, but perhaps more significantly in his childhood.

Corollary
A. Positive experience in the past and in the present enables the human to remain open to the world in both dimensions (active and passive):

1. To receive experience and learning.

2. To reach out for new, self-chosen experiences and learning. It also enables him to obtain fullest use of self, the fullest out of the experience of life (joi de vivre, delight of life).

Proposition
II. Negative human experience holds potential for:

Corollary
A. Immediate closing of self to the world in both directions, active and passive (permitting people and ideas to have access to one's self and reaching out to people and for ideas).

Corollary
B. Or it leads to a temporary closing of self followed by a specific, more intense opening. This second possibility, the change of meaning of an experience from negative to positive, occurs when a sensitive helping person (such as the counselor or friend) intervenes to provide self-understanding at a critical moment in the negative experience.

Proposition
III. Whatever facilitating power to create the beautiful and noble person the positive human experience has under Proposition I, is magnified, perhaps exponentially, when it occurs in the presence of other people significant to the subject.

Proposition
IV. The facilitating power of the experience is in relationship to the awareness that its benefits have been truly earned (worked for) by the subject. Thus, the positive drug experience in converse, maybe expected to reverse growth toward the beautiful and noble.

Proposition
V. Knowledge facilitates the intensity of the experience and its facilitating power as seen particularly in the appreciation of beauty. "Beauty is knowledge, knowledge is beauty."

Proposition
VI. Variation of experience adds power; repetition significantly reduces facilitating power. The beautiful and noble person is characterized by "new" experiences.

Proposition
VII. A predictable frequency of excitement experience, positive or negative, is demanded for the beautiful and noble person. The major reversor of the facilitating process is not hate but boredom.

Proposition
VIII. Individual differences exceed group differences in the choice of the facilitating experience. The specific experiences selected as being positive vary widely among individuals in the same group.

Proposition
IX. In the specific ennobling process, two parallel experiences predominate:

Helping another person
Being helped by others

While the alturistic or compassionate criterion may appear to demand the former, in actuality, a reasonable balance of both is an absolute criterion.

There is a pride that the psychologists has in his growing knowledge and understanding of the person with problem behavior. It emerges out of the psychologist's incontrovertibly intimate relationship over the past 50 years with the phenomena of maladjustment. He is closer to his data than Darwin was to his plant specimens. He has spent long, arduous hours, over months and years in deep conversation, personal, unsparing of details; he has received the most hidden of secrets in the highest of trust from his clients and from his patients. And out of this abundancy of personal revelation, the psychologist has been able to fashion theory and science--a science not of behavior but of maladjusted behavior.

However, the superbly happy person, the productive and delighted person rarely finds his way into the psychologist's office. The intimacy with these data have been denied by the psychologist. Beautiful people don't flock together. We would have to find them one by one--a painful prospect for those of us who tested thousands all in one hour to standarize personal adjustment inventories. These people, these data are not institutionalized,

neither in hospital rooms nor in classrooms. Clearly, research in this area is going to require a major change in strategy.

Self-nomination holds hazards peculiarly reminiscent of the psychotic's unwillingness to see himself as maladjusted. Out of the host of inventories and projective instruments, only a few such as the POI emerge with any pertinence. Adaptations of the MMPI and the Rorschach hold promise, only of compounding our past errors.

Definition of such a person or of beautiful behavior, a necessary first step in a theory, has its peculiar perils. The Boy Scout law, the American's creed, paragraphs from Old and New Testament, any convenient list of virtues can be restated in operational terms. I recall, with concern, the sarcastic attributions of "ecstatic" terminology assigned by grim critics to the early work of Margaret Ribble on the importance of a mother. Are we about to invite similar compliments? A presentation of some of this research before a small faculty group evoked the unkindness that I might become the "Norman Vincent Peale" of our campus. The search for a definition will be with us for a long time. I feel confident the definitions I have offered touch close to the real person we seek. I feel equally confident that coming years will see major modifications.

The peculiar plagues and pitfalls of a psychology of all behavior drain me of the courage to offer a "complete theory." I would like such a theory to be associated with my name. But I think like the second Russian revolution, the cult of personality in developing personality theories deserves an end which ought not be linger as long as did Stalinism but still be as definitive. No man produced and tested a theory in psychology all of himself. There is an enormous, exciting world of behavior more open to exploration to us than is the surface of the moon. I invite you to join in the expedition.

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